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THE NIS PROGRAM

The National Intelligence Surveys Program was formulated under provisions of NSC Intelligence Directive No. 3 for the purpose of developing basic intelligence required by this Government. The essential elements of the NIS Program are set forth in "Standard Instructions for National Intelligence Surveys" which was developed by CIA in collaboration with other appropriate agencies. The implementation of this Program is the responsibility of the NIS Committee which represents the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Chiefs of the Intelligence Agencies of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force.

The NIS Program is a joint operation in which each intelligence agency has a definite area of responsibility concerned with intelligence collection, file maintenance, and NIS production. More than thirty-seven major components of IAC and non-IAC agencies are contributing to the NIS. Production responsibilities are assigned to the government agencies best qualified by reason of their intelligence requirements, production capabilities, and dominant interest to assume these responsibilities. This insures the presentation of the best basic intelligence available to this Government on the topics covered in the NIS. Even though the information in an NIS element is incomplete, it still represents the best we have as of the cut-off date of the study, and the gaps are pointed out for guidance of intelligence collecting activities. When new information warrants, revised NIS are published under the Maintenance Program.

Production responsibility allocations are under continuing review and re-allocations are made where warranted. For example, responsibilities for coordinating all Chapter VII (Scientific) production, and for producing certain elements of this Chapter were transferred from the agency to which originally assigned to the Office of Scientific Intelligence, CIA, when that office developed capabilities which made it better qualified to assume these responsibilities.

Since 1949, when the NIS Program was begun, 1,363 individual Sections have been produced on 57 of the 108 NIS areas, which is the equivalent of approximately 21 complete NIS. Approximately 1,000 of these Sections have been published and the balance are in process of publication. An additional 219 Sections are in various stages of preparation in the producing agencies. In addition, base maps have been prepared for 80 NIS areas and Preliminary Gazetteers for 50 NIS areas.

NIS production is scheduled in accordance with JCS priorities and intelligence agency capabilities. Limitations of the latter have precluded across-the-board production of NIS on all JCS high priority areas and made it necessary to undertake partial surveys on a considerable number of NIS areas. However, agency capabilities have been utilized to the maximum extent possible on the high priority areas with the result that initial NIS production on a group of 24 areas of highest priority is approximately 45% complete, whereas, the entire program is about 22% complete. NIS on 10 individual areas are over 75% complete and 5 of these are in the JCS high priority list. At the present rate of production, which is the equivalent of approximately 8 complete NIS per year, it will take 13 years to complete NIS on all areas and have the Program on a full maintenance basis by FY 1958.

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